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Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine

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September 09

GREEN
is not just
a color

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Big Screen

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Visions

LOCAL FOOD - LOCAL MUSIC - LOCAL FUN

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PUBLISHER | Andrew Sherburne
Publisher@LittleVillageMag.com

MANAGING EDITOR | Melody Dworak
Editor@LittleVillageMag.com

FEATURES EDITOR | Paul Sorenson
Features@LittleVillageMag.com

ARTS EDITOR | Kent Williams
Arts@LittleVillageMag.com

LAYOUT & DESIGN | Andrew Sherburne

EDITORIAL INTERN | Kelly Ostrem

ADVERTISING | Kelsey Fritz
Ads@LittleVillageMag.com

WEB EDITOR | Matt Steele

CONTRIBUTORS | Cecil Adams, Maggie Anderson, Thomas Dean, Lorin Ditzler, Kurt Michael Friese, Kembrew McLeod, Kelly Ostrem, Scott Samuelson, John Schlotfeld, Andrew Sherburne, Nina Sherburne, Dr. Star, Roland Sweet, Erin Tiesman, Tom Tomorrow, Whitney Warne, Kent Williams

PHOTOS | Elizabeth Graf, Andrew Sherburne, Whitney Warne

CONTACT | P.O. Box 736
Iowa City | Iowa | 52240
www.LittleVillageMag.com
Calendar@LittleVillageMag.com

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

TOP FIVE REASONS WE DO NOT NEED OBAMA'S PROPOSED CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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1) IMPOSE NEW REGULATIONS ON THE BANKING INDUSTRY? WHAT-
EVER **FOR?**

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WE'VE LEARNED OUR **LESSON!** NOW GET OVER IT **ALREADY!**

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OUR CREATIVE SPIRITS WILL SIMPLY WITHER AWAY AND **DIE!**

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AND BY "SCAMS" WE MEAN "EXCITING FI-NANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES"!!

5) AN INJURY TO CREDIT CARD COMPANIES IS AN INJURY TO **ALL!**

AS LONG AS FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS OURS SUFFER THE INJUSTICE OF NEEDLESS REGULATORY **OVERSIGHT--**

--THEN **NO MAN OR WOMAN CAN TRULY BE FREE!**

TO THE **BAR-RICADES, COMRADES!**

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Urban Brain Gain

Last month, I proposed that, as a human society, we are much less mobile than we think. But we've known for a long time that most rural Iowa counties and communities have seen significant population declines in recent years as our state's urban areas increase. So clearly there's some moving around within our state. While we acknowledge reality, we can still explore a few myths.

First, on the most general level, the Pew study I cited last month acknowledges that urban areas across the country, overall, are growing more rapidly than rural. Much of the growth disparity, however, is due to the mere fact that more people live in urban areas and thus they propagate in larger numbers. Even so, Iowa's rural population is declining in real terms, and significantly. Census information from 2008 says that incorporated places in Iowa's metropolitan counties grew by 8.5 percent. The state's largest gains were in cities larger than 10,000—more than a six-percent increase. Cities under 5,000 dropped by one percent. The biggest declines were in the most rural areas: non-metropolitan populations decreased by a little more than four percent.

So, yes, even though over half of Iowans have always lived in the state, there's plenty of intrastate shifting. The bucolic family farms are disappearing in larger and larger numbers, and the iconic small towns that pepper "beautiful Iowa" keepsake picture books and flood our television news screens every four years at presidential caucus time have not represented the majority Iowa existence since, when, the farm crisis?

Whoops! Back it up! Here's where the myth-busting comes in. While Iowa's supposedly quintessential rural character is in fact disappearing faster than Wal-Mart can squash a mom-and-pop store on Main Street, it's not a recent phenomenon.

When did Iowa become an "urban state"? The definitions of "rural" and "urban" have changed somewhat over time, but according to contemporaneous U.S. Census definitions,

over half of Iowa's population was urban by the 1950 census, at 54.5 percent. At some point over 60 years ago, Iowa was no longer a "rural state." In fact, rural/urban population parity had been mostly realized by the 1890 census. Today, "urban," according to the U.S. Census Bureau, is defined by 1,000 persons per square mile (urbanized areas—UA's) and 500 for surrounding census blocks (urban clusters—UC's). A UA generally begins at around 50,000 people. Iowa currently stands at 61 percent urban. After next year's census, that will surely rise again.

This demographic shift was not sudden. In fact, Iowa was moving toward inevitable urbanity since the state's inception. Certainly the majority of white settlers came to the new territory of Iowa to farm when the border was opened in 1838, but the Industrial Revolution was already in full swing.

It was only a matter of time—and not much time—for the industrialization of the farm to make its way to the frontier. Inherently, farm mechanization would require fewer and fewer farmers. With the state's frontier towns almost exclusively built to support agricultural communities, their initial reasons for being were doomed to obsolescence before they were even established.

The first chapter of E. Bradford Burns' *Kinship With the Land: Regionalist Thought in Iowa, 1894-1942* shows that essayists in the 1880s and 1890s were already lamenting the biggest social and cultural issues facing our state: mechanization of the farm and the decline of the small farmer, the replacement of local by global markets, the movement of culture and technology to urban areas, and the resultant exodus of youth from the farm and small town to the cities. Sound familiar? These phenomena were not unique to Iowa. According to Alan Trachtenberg in *The*

Incorporation of America, 40 percent of the population of rural townships nationally disappeared in the 1880s. By 1900, 90 percent of all manufacturing took place in cities. It's not hard to figure out where that 40 percent of rural people went.

The image of Iowa that so many yearn for—the bucolic farm, the iconic small town—has not been the majority experience of the state for over half a century. If it ever really existed, the seeds of its own doom were planted from the very beginning.

Let's acknowledge the true nature of our state, to know that rural-to-urban migration has actually been "who we are" from shortly after statehood. We are—and nearly always have been—more about the loss of the farm and the small town than their iconic existence. It is ironic that, for well over a century, Iowans have spent much psychic, cultural and political energy on worrying over the loss of a supposed

essential character that existed only fleetingly and was practically doomed to extinction in its very conception. We decry the loss of something we really never had. Even Grant Wood in the 1930s was painting an ideal that certainly didn't exist in his time and probably never quite did.

My intent here is not to suggest that rurality has been only a figment of our imagination or that the cultural values of the farm and small town were simply foolish pipe dreams. The true extent of the mythical "Iowa character" is less than we imagine, but the loss of the family farm, the small town and a rural culture indeed has real—and serious—consequences. Next month, we'll talk about why it's important to recapture what maybe we never had. **IV**

Thomas Dean has lived in Rockford, Illinois; DeKalb, Illinois; Madison, Wisconsin; Coralville, Iowa; Glendale, Wisconsin; Jackson, Wisconsin; Brown Deer, Wisconsin; East Lansing, Michigan; Moorhead, Minnesota; and Iowa City, Iowa.

**Iowa is currently
61% urban.**



Covert Workouts

8 simple tips for a secretly healthier life

Walk or bike everywhere.

It will save you gas and be kinder to the earth. It also has much more calorie burning power than driving around. Can't haul as much from the grocery on foot? Just go more often, fall is much prettier when you spend it outside.



Drink water.

For a whopping zero calories, you can quench your thirst straight from the tap, saving all kinds of plastic, glass and aluminum from the trash. Drinking water means no more wasted calories on sugary juices and sodas or alcoholic concoctions.

Get more done on TV night.

Use commercials to do some exercises. In the first commercial break do lunges, during the second try crunches, in the third jumping jacks, and the fourth push-ups. Mix it up and add other exercises too. This is also a great way to break up homework, and it will have you coming back to the reading, paper, etc. a little more invigorated.

Eat more veggies.

Knock down the average times you eat meat per week by at least one meal. Meat production is a costly endeavor for our planet, and reducing your carnivorous habits even a little can help. Plus, a walk to your nearest farmers market for fresh local produce is a wonderful way to keep you and our community a little healthier.

Life is short—multitask!

Do squats while brushing your teeth. Bicep curl your groceries. Maybe do a few push-ups when you wake up in the morning. It will leave you feeling a little stronger as you go through your day. Keep it up and you'll be amazed by your progress in just a few weeks!

Use a backpack.

When worn properly it can help distribute the weight of your load. The more weight you carry (not too much though, you don't want to hurt yourself!), the more challenging a walk for your body. When your body has to work hard, you will burn more calories than just walking sans your load.

Skip the email.

Need to talk to someone? Skip the email and walk over to deliver the message. Too far away? Give them a call. While you're on the phone, walk around the room, the hallway, or up and down stairs. You'll be working out without even knowing it.

Green up your workout.

Swap workout gear with a friend. Borrow weights or a mat or a stability ball. Trade DVDs or borrow them from the library. Get a treadmill or bike at a second-hand store and save money and give someone's old equipment a new ride. **lv**

Kelly Ostrem is going back to school.

Reuse This Magazine

You weren't going to throw this magazine away, were you? Well, at least 65 percent of you wouldn't have (see "Grading Green," cover story, page 12).

Environmental stewardship is as much about mundane, simple tasks as it is corporate action and envirolgislation.

The clichés are true. Saving our Earth starts at home.

Thankfully, extending the life of this magazine is easy. Below (and sprinkled throughout the magazine) are suggestions for reusing newsprint.

Streak-free windows

Newsprint is better at drying and polishing your windows and mirrors than paper towels. Don't worry, glass doesn't have oils to remove ink (like fingers do), so no streaks!

Dry wet shoes

Got wet feet? Stuff newsprint into the inside to prevent mold and odor.

Sop up grease

Place newsprint under cars with fluid leaks. Not only are you reusing the paper, but you're preventing toxic chemicals from reaching local rivers and lakes!

Wrap it up

Gift giving doesn't have to be hard on the environment. Save your favorite articles to wrap presents.

Save your vinyl

Newsprint is a handy substitute sleeve for vintage records.



More

Look for this symbol to learn more ways you can reduce waste by reusing this magazine.

Nina Sherburne is an environmental science graduate and Montessori school teacher.

Children of Too-Much Corn



Food, Inc. Iowa City Premiere September 11 Bjou Theatre

Who: Sponsored by Slow Food Iowa City and Edible Iowa River Valley

What: *Food, Inc.* A documentary film by Robert Kenner, with Michael Pollan and Eric Schlosser

Where: The Bijou Theater in the Iowa Memorial Union, Iowa City

When: Premiering September 11 with a discussion panel to follow featuring biodynamic dairy farmer Francis Thicke, renewable energy and sustainability guru Lonnie Gamble, and Mt. Vernon organic farmer Laura Krouse. The film runs through September 17.

Why: Because the future of our food, and thus our families and our future, depend on the dietary decisions we make today.

How: Tickets are on sale September 1 at the IMU Box Office. \$5 admission, plus a requested donation of \$5 to Slow Food Iowa City's Time for Lunch child nutrition campaign.

In 2006 Al Gore and Davis Guggenheim shook the world awake with their Oscar-winning documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. Now a film every bit as jarring is coming to Iowa City, about a subject that threatens us far more immediately even than climate change: our own food. It's called *Food, Inc.*, and the strange thing is it took a lot of begging and tooth-pulling to get it to Iowa, even though not showing a documentary about the perils of industrial agriculture here in the belly of the agribusiness beast is like not showing *An Inconvenient Truth* on earth.

Premiering September 11 at the Bijou Theater in the Iowa Memorial Union, and running for only one week, *Food, Inc.* shows us how and why, as co-executive producer Michael Pollan put it, "the way we eat has changed more in the last 50 years than in the previous 10,000." Our grocery stores have more products than ever, but this is an illusion of variety. Of those 47,000 products, about 90 percent are made corn, soy or both.

No one can contest that food is every bit as important to human survival as air or water. If the supply of our air or water were to somehow come under the control of just a handful of multinational conglomerates, who could regulate—unabated—who got how much water or who would be allowed to breathe, we'd be in the streets with torches and pitchforks in our millions. Yet today that is precisely what has happened to our food.

Consider these bullet points from the film:

- In the 1970s, the top five beef packers controlled 25 percent of the market. Today the top four control 80 percent.

- Also in the '70s, we had thousands of slaughterhouses producing our beef, today we have 13. Yet we regulate them worse than before because (among many other reasons)...During the Bush administration, the head of the F.D.A. was the former executive VP of the National Food Processors Association, and the chief of staff of the U.S.D.A. was the former head lobbyist for the beef industry.
- In 1998, the U.S.D.A. could shut down plants that repeatedly failed tests for E. coli 0157:H7. After being sued by the meat and poultry associations, the U.S.D.A. no longer has that power.

Talk about the fox guarding the henhouse. This is just another example of the golden rule: He who has the gold makes the rules.

The filmmakers interviewed two chicken producers, one with a contract with Tyson, the other with Perdue. The Tyson farmer initially was going to let the cameras into his chicken houses, where he raised some 300,000 chickens at a time, but after repeated visits from Tyson executives, he changed his mind. Perdue-contracted farmer Carole Morison decided to tell the truth, let the cameras in, and subsequently lost her contract with Perdue. Executives of both companies refused to be interviewed for the film.

To get those contracts, which many farmers feel they must do to keep their farms, they are required to make massive personal investments. The average chicken farmer carries a debt of \$500,000, and makes an annual income of \$18,000. The corporations control every aspect of the production from hatching through slaughter to the styrofoam tray in the back of the grocery store. If a farmer deviates from their stipulations at all, their contract will be revoked and the farmer is left with nothing but the half-million-dollar debt. This is nothing short of indentured servitude.

Of course no film featuring Michael Pollan could be complete with a discussion of the role of corn in our food system, and *Food, Inc.* goes into graphic and often heart-wrenching detail about the consequences of mass-produced and government-subsidized industrial corn production and processing. They interview a food chemist who is quite proud of the technological achievements he and his associates have brought to market, and he considers the creation of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) to

be the highpoint of those achievements. This despite the fact that the sheer ubiquitousness of HFCS in so much of the food that we—and especially our children—eat has led to a world where if you were born after 2000, you have a one-in-three chance of contracting early-onset diabetes. If you're a minority, that ratio climbs to one-in-two. No amount of health care reform can deal with the costs that fact implies.

Fully one-third of the land in the United States is planted to corn. No doubt here in Iowa that proportion is much higher. The reason for this is that corn is heavily subsidized by your tax dollars. The same goes for soy. In 1996, when it introduced Round-Up Ready Soybeans®, agribusiness giant Monsanto controlled two percent of the of the U.S. soybean market. Today 90 percent of America's soybeans contain Monsanto's patented gene. This from the company that, prior to rebranding itself an agribusiness company, was a chemical company that made its fortune inventing and then producing substances such as

Agent Orange and DDT. The December 2000 Supreme Court decision that helped Monsanto enforce its seed patents was authored by Justice Clarence Thomas, who from 1976 to 1979 was an attorney for—you guessed it—Monsanto.

Because we are, indeed, what we eat, this film's dramatic issues touch every aspect of our lives, from health to education to energy, to climate change, national security and immigration. Author and *Food, Inc.* co-producer Eric Schlosser said in an interview, "The typical farm worker is a young Latino male who does not speak English and earns about \$10,000 a year. The typical meatpacking worker has a similar background and earns about twice that amount. A very large proportion of the nation's farm workers and meatpackers are illegal immigrants."

Yet when asked if the American food industry could exist without these underpaid and undocumented workers, Schlosser said, "The food industry would not only survive, but it would have a much more stable work-

force. We would have much less rural poverty. And...doubling the hourly wage of every farm worker in this country might add \$50 at most to a family's annual food bill."

That *Food, Inc.* should have at least the same impact as *An Inconvenient Truth* (or for that matter, Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*) is undeniable. Whether it will depends on how many people see it, and what actions they take as a result. If I had a magic wand to wave I'd make it required viewing for every student and every politician in the country. A few of its images are enough to make the strongest of us squeamish, and its segment about the mom who now lobbies Congress for stronger food safety requirements after an E. coli-tainted burger killed her son will wrench the most hardened of hearts.

Today if we are what we eat (and we are), then most Americans are fast, cheap and easy. Perhaps this film will help that change. **IV**

It's About the Food is a monthly feature of *Little Village*. Chef Kurt Michael Friese is co-owner, with his wife Kim, of the Iowa City restaurant *Devotay* and serves on the *Slow Food USA* Board of Directors. Comments may be directed to devotay@mchsi.com.

The average chicken farmer carries a debt of \$500,000, and makes an annual income of \$18,000.

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ROCK SYLLABUS

While love, sex and partying top the list of subject matter covered in pop, rock and hip hop songs, school is another staple—ranking slightly below songs about summer, a season that is sadly coming to a close. Here's a list of 20 of my favorite school songs.

School Day (Ring! Ring! Goes the Bell)

Chuck Berry, 1957

Back before America's complexion began changing, Chuck Berry realized he could be a rich man if he wrote about subjects that white teens could relate to: cars, romance and school. Formulaic songwriting at its best.

We Rule the School

Belle & Sebastian, 1996

Classic twee indie rock—with a flute solo, natch. This impressionistic piece (sample lyric: “on a bus stop in the town/ ‘we rule the school’/ written for anyone with eyes...”) perfectly captures the melancholic feelings school often brings out in those of us who are insecure.

Violent School

The Dead Milkmen, 1985

Ah, a staple of my adolescence. On this two-minute ditty, these punk/jokers tossed off a cheap hardcore song parody with lyrics that could only work in a pre-Columbine era: “violence rules!/ guns are cool!/ and we’ve got guns in our school!”

I Don't Wanna Go to School

The Donnas, 1997

Recorded when the four women in the Donnas were genuine high school students, this explicit Ramones rip-off makes a strong case for the aesthetic value of plagiarism.

I Was a High School Psychopath

Screeching Weasel, 1993

Me too.



Hot Chip

And I Was a Boy from School

Hot Chip, 2006

We've had classic rock 'n' roll, twee indie, a hardcore parody, and a punk pastiche. Now it's time for a dance number, albeit one for hipsters. To paraphrase House of Pain, this Hot Chip song makes me wanna jump around, jump up, and get down.

Good Morning Little School Girl

Sonny Boy Williamson, 1937

The lyrical blueprint for every lecherous rock 'n' roll song that followed: “Got a sweet little angel/ I love the way she spreads her wings/ When she spreads them all over me/ she brings joy into everything.”

School Days

The Runaways, 1977

The Joan Jett-fronted incarnation of this all-female '70s rock machine produced many great songs, including this throwaway gem. It might not win any poetry contests (sample lyric: “Never made the honor roll/ hated rules that I was told”), but it's counterbalanced by Jett's riffastic guitar playing, snarling vocals, and hooky chorus—all of which provide the blueprint for a badass career that has spanned four (!!!) decades.

High School

Hanoi Rocks, 1984

An awesome '80s glam metal band that was neither from Hollywood nor Hanoi (they were actually from Finland). This one has a lyrical twist: “I wanna TEACH high schooooooool!”

High School Nights

Dave Edmunds, 1985

There weren't many memorable tracks from the original motion picture soundtrack for *Porky's Revenge!* (Clarence Clemmons covering the "Peter Gunn Theme," anyone?), but this Jeff Lynne-produced bubblicious nugget overachieved, quite successfully.

School Girl

Dennis Wilson, 1977

From the late Beach Boys drummer's solo album, *Pacific Ocean Blue*, this track makes the case for why the Beach Boys mattered long after their early-to-mid-1960s heyday. Lush vocals, modest production, and throwaway lyrics about, well, a schoolgirl—it's perfect pop.

Fuck School

The Replacements, 1982

From the group's noisy *Stink* EP, before Paul Westerberg embraced his melodic side, this track rebels against authority with both an ironic wink and a sincere middle finger.

School Boy Crush

Average White Band, 1975

Sampled by Pete Rock and other legendary hip hop producers, this 1975 song by the world's most unlikely Caucasian (and Scottish!) funk band is an in-the-pocket classic.

Where'd You Hear It?

A staple loop for hip-hop's golden age, you may recognize it from TLC's *Ain't 2 Proud 2 Beg*, Eric B. & Rakim's *Microphone Fiend* or Too Short's *Life is...Too Short*. It has also been sampled by EPMD, De La Soul and even Janet Jackson.

Now That School is Through

Cindy & the Playmates, early '70s

This track from *Home Schooled: The ABC's of Kid Soul* (2007), put out by the fantastic Chicago-based Numero Group label, was released on a fly-by-night label and never heard from again.

Bitch School

Spinal Tap, 1992

Musical satire at its best.

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The G-List

Spreading the enviro-
love in Iowa City

It was a big idea that started small. But that small step turned into a \$57,000 grant through the International City/County Management Association, in conjunction with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and a multi-organization project called ECO Iowa City.

The grant for green

The initiative was the brainchild of Jen Jordan, recycling coordinator at the Iowa City Public Works Division and Maeve Clark, coordinator of information services at the Iowa City Public Library. With knowledge of the grant—a nationwide competition for applicants—Clark and Jordan joined together to think of ways to create a safer, healthier and greener Iowa City. The ECO Iowa City project was lucky to receive a grant—515 other libraries across the country also applied. Only nine were chosen.

“One of nine, we were so happy to receive one,” Jordan said. “I have found with working with the library, they have so much stuff going on. There’s so much information there and so many resources. It’s so beneficial to pull together.”

The grant will cover administrative fees and an internship, currently filled by a University of Iowa engineering student. It will also pay for workshops, demonstrations and materi-

als for those that wish to attend the various events.

Clark said the Iowa City grant application was particularly interesting because so many other “green” agencies and organizations are collaborating in the program.

“It’s fun, and it’s only going to get better from here,” Clark said.

The grant application had discussed the desire to bring many Iowa City eco-agencies together in an effort to establish communication and further collaboration in creating a greener environment. Clark and Jordan had no idea how quickly the enthusiasm would

make more worms. This is a really good way for apartment dwellers to turn their kitchen scraps into a really great resource.”

Meyer is excited to join the ECO Iowa City initiative and said selling the compost bins and hosting the workshop will be exciting for the whole family—even the kids like to see the worms.

“They’re approaching it in a really, really good way,” Meyer said of the library and public works. “They’re not just doing it on their own. That’s how it’s been in the environmental industry—we create organizations and work on our own. Our environment is continu-

“Vermicomposting is a really good way for apartment dwellers to turn their kitchen scraps into a really great resource.”

—Fred Meyer
Backyard Abundance



spread. More than two dozen local agencies have jumped on board with ECO Iowa City including the Iowa City Environmental Film Festival, Habitat for Humanity and New Pioneer and Iowa City Farmer’s Market – just to name a few.

The message in the mission

Fred Meyer, executive director and chairperson of Backyard Abundance—one of the sponsors of ECO Iowa City—said his presentation on vermicomposting, or composting with worms, will feature how to turn garbage into worm food with the use of large barrels that will house the process and prevent garbage from piling up in landfills. Backyard Abundance’s mission is to help citizens create the best use of their land to make it a greener place—starting with the backyard.

“Worm composting is really easy. I have a worm bin in my basement, and they withstand a quite a bit of neglect,” Meyer said. “They have three purposes in life: eat, poop and

ing to crumble around us, and this strategy is not working by ourselves. They’re bringing in organizations to work together in this holistic unit.”

For Mike Carberry, executive director of iRenew, a nonprofit Iowa renewable energy association, the joining of ECO Iowa City was an easy decision. As a group hoping to spread awareness of energy efficiency and sustainability, the message can be spread along with other great lessons with the ECO Iowa City initiative.

“Well, we really want to move into more into the main street. Those concepts are not niche concepts. I think the general public is starting to realize that this stuff is the way we need to—here’s a message about changing your light bulb, or using fewer appliances as we get higher energy prices. They get that,” Carberry said.

The annual Energy Expo, hosted by iRenew, will provide demonstrations on energy efficiency and sustainability, environmental



Compost it

Newsprint is brown waste, part of a properly balanced worm bin along with your green plant-based waste.

Mulch it

Newsprint is a good mulch, but cover it with a decorative mulch to protect it from decay and for aesthetics.

and “green” jobs now being created throughout Iowa, and how to lower the cost of utility bills.

“There’s two steps: conservation and efficiency,” Carberry said. “Energy efficiency is the best way.”

Though iRenew’s focus and expo is primarily energy, Carberry said the mission has expanded from its original 1992 mission to climate change, local and organic food and the carbon footprint that will be left behind for future generations.

In Iowa City, organic and local food are taken very seriously, and for James Nisly, president of the board for the Johnson County Local Food Alliance and a coordinator of the eighth annual Field to Family food event, celebrating local food and culinary excellence goes hand-in-hand with leading a greener lifestyle.

“We believe that local sustainably produced food is very important for the health of our community,” Nisly said. “It’s healthy food, a healthy diet is the foundation of people being healthy and a healthy community. It’s also healthy for our environment.”

Field to Family will be hosting an array of guest speakers and guest chefs, including Daniel Orr, author of *Real Food* and new book *FARMfood*, a guide to green-living recipes.

Seven Iowa City restaurants will be taking part in Culinary Walk, a walking tour featuring locally grown and prepared appetizers by local restaurants. Nisly said promoting local

“Local sustainably produced food is very important for the health of our community.”

—James Nisly

Johnson County Local Food Alliance

restaurants may not be as “green” as other ECO Iowa City events, but it’s still promoting healthy living.

“It’s more a celebration of local foods and culinary excellence,” he said. “We think that good, healthy food is something to be celebrated.”

Coming together

While events for this fall are under way and will continue to evolve through fall 2010 when the grant ends, Maeve Clark and Jen Jordan watch with excitement as more and more Iowa City organizations continue to join forces for ECO Iowa City and its green dreams.

G-LIST CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 >>

UPCOMING EVENTS

ECO Iowa City

Thursday, September 19

Indoor composting with worms, presented by Fred Meyer and Roxanne Mitten of Backyard Abundance. 7p.m. at the Iowa City Public Library, Room A. Worm composting bins will be available for \$25.

Monday, September 21

Sense of Wonder, an environmental film about Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring*. 7p.m. at the Iowa City Public Library, Room A.

Thursday, September 24

Energy Efficiency in Your Home, presented by John O’Roake, energy efficiency manager at MidAmerican Energy. 7p.m. at the Iowa City Public Library, Room A. Weather kits will be provided to attendees.

For more information and updates on events later in the season, go to www.icpl.org/eco-iowa-city.

I-Renew Energy and Sustainability Expo

Saturday and Sunday, September 12-13
Featuring 70 presenters and 90 exhibits, live auction and children’s program.
Frontier Natural Products Co-op
3021 78th St. Norway, IA 52318 (about 30 minutes northwest of Iowa City)

For a complete schedule of workshops and activities visit www.irenew.org/expo.

Field to Family Johnson County Local Food Alliance Benefit Culinary Walk

Thursday, September 10, 5:30-8 p.m.
Tickets \$25/person, \$15 with current student ID

General public tickets at New Pioneer Food Co-op stores and IMU Box Office. Student tickets at IMU box office (in person only) 319-335-3041

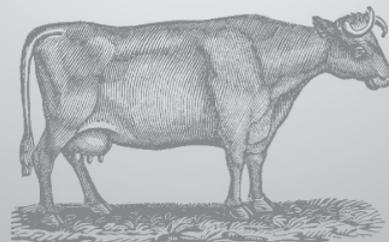
Take a stroll through Iowa City and sample hors d’oeuvres from seven restaurants that understand local food excellence. Visit 126, Atlas, Devotay, IMU, Motley Cow, New Pioneer Food Co-op, and The Red Avocado.

For a complete calendar of events visit www.jclfa.org.

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Grading Green

We're a progressive city. Or so we've been told. Sure, we've got the degrees and the ACT scores to prove our intellectual might, but are we putting those brains to work for the benefit of our fragile ecosystem? Are we truly living a better, greener life? *Little Village* broke down our performance in six eco areas to discover our strengths and weaknesses and whether we're earning our green reputation.

Air Quality

Of all the ways we interact daily with our ecosystem, the one we often think of last is also the most constant indelible link with our environment: breathing.



We're not breathing easy

So how good is the air in Johnson County? The American Lung Association's 2009 *State of the Air* report gives Johnson County a grade of "F" based on PM2.5 particle pollution levels sampled at Hoover Elementary in Iowa City. Details indicate that, from 2005-2007, Iowa City recorded 11 days of air quality at the orange risk level, meaning PM2.5 levels exceeded the EPA's threshold of 35, making them "unhealthy for sensitive groups," but no days at the red or purple levels, which would indicate unhealthy air quality for the entire population.

Sean Fitzsimmons, an environmental specialist in air quality at the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), explained that PM2.5 levels measure air concentration of particles measuring 2.5 microns in diameter or less—usually car exhaust, particles emitted from fires, and atmospheric compounds created from burning coal.

"If our three-year 'design value' is over 35, we can take legal action," says Fitzsimmons. Iowa City's three-year rolling 'design value' measures 29, though Fitzsimmons acknowledges it "would be nice if it was lower."

Still, he says, our overall air quality is somewhere between the pristine air of the Rockies and the polluted smog of big cities.

"Should we ever be over 35 for a day? Absolutely not," he says. "It's hard on asthmatics, kids and the elderly. I'd like to see us at half of the levels (18).

That would be healthy for everybody all the time. But we don't have that."

Gold Star

Smoke-Free Air Act. The American Lung Association gave Iowa the nation's first grade of "A" for the smoking ban that took effect last year. Regardless of the personal liberty arguments that can be made regarding the ban, the positive effect on indoor air quality is unquestionable, and in that respect we're breathing better air since last July.

Needs Improvement

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). David Kirby at the Huffington Post reported earlier this year that CAFOs may have something to do with H1N1 flu. Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement have long contended that CAFOs are having negative effects on air quality in the state. On the most basic level, a 2002 Iowa State University study recommends "regulatory action" to better control hydrogen sulfide, ammonia and odors from factory farms.

Energy

Thinking of living greener? The first thing that often comes to mind is energy. How is it produced? How much do we use? How much do we waste?

Clean power is the holy grail of earth-friendly activities. So are we getting cleaner?

Around here, yes. According to internal data from MidAmerican Energy, Iowa City's primary utility company, 20 percent of the company's energy comes from renewable sources—and according to a 2009 report from the American Wind Energy Association, MidAmerican ranks number one nationally for installation of wind-powered electric generation.

The University of Iowa is getting green energy, too, from over 40,000 tons of oak hulls trucked down from Quaker Oat's Cedar Rapids facility. Burning the cereal byproduct accounts for roughly 20 percent of the power generated from the UI's Main Power Plant.

So our energy is getting greener but unfortunately, as a northern state with low population density, it isn't surprising that Iowan's energy consumption is the 14th

highest in the country at 406 million Btu per capita per year, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. To improve on those numbers, we'll have to do more at home.



World leaders in renewable energy

Gold Star:

Wind energy. The Iowa Renewable Energy Association estimates that Iowa's 400+ wind turbines avoid over 1.3 million tons of carbon dioxide annually, and Iowa has the potential to produce almost five times our own annual electrical consumption through wind power. The 2008 statewide wind output of 2,791 megawatts is second to only Texas and accounts for 11 percent of the nation's total wind power capacity.

Needs Improvement:

Home improvement. According to the Iowa Energy Center, the average Iowa family spends half of its annual energy bill on heating and cooling. Simple solutions can do a lot to improve energy efficiency in your home or apartment, from compact fluorescent light bulbs to weatherizing your windows (it's worth the hassle), to buying EnergyStar models when it's time to replace your old appliances.



Green Space and Recreation

Every spring, Iowa emerges from its winter cocoon as a great green expanse. Our land here is fertile and rich, which is great for agriculture, but has an unfortunate side effect: 98 percent of Iowa's lands have been developed, leaving precious little land for parks and reserves. On the plus side, here in Johnson County, we have F.W. Kent Park (1082 acres) and Lake Macbride State Park (2180 acres).

"We're really lucky," explains Kris Ackerson, a transportation planner at Johnson County Council of Governments. "Lake McBride is one of the few large water bodies in the state, with access



More of good would be better

to great activities like fishing, camping, biking, boating and horse-back riding."

Iowa City proper has 1,093 acres of parkland, with 357 more undeveloped acres set aside for parks that in total, once developed, will comprise 9.3 percent of the city's roughly 15,600 acres, average for a city of its size according to data from Trust for Public Lands. Measuring by population, Iowa City has 21.6 acres of parkland per thousand residents, slightly better than average.

Mike Moran, acting director of Iowa City Parks and Recreation, says Iowa City is "average to

just below average in terms of opportunities, land and facilities." He cites more than 35,000 annual registrations for city recreation programs as a positive sign that our community utilizes what we do have.

Gold Star:

Trails. Multi-use trails cover nearly 200 miles between county, city and state park systems. Ackerson applauds local government for its foresight in developing the current trail system and future plans to connect the remaining gaps. It isn't perfect yet, but collaboration between city, county and advocacy groups have resulted in a thorough plan for the future. Good enough to earn a Bike

Friendly Community Honorable Mention from the League of American Bicyclists.

Needs Improvement:

Funding. Even though voters passed a 2008 bond injecting \$20 million into land conservation, none of that goes to city land or facilities. With belt tightening at city hall, Moran says: "We're adequately funded now, but we may feel the crunch. We understand that public safety outweighs public recreation." Less money comes at a time when the city's Parks & Recreation department's Master Plan recommends increased funding to meet 11 new objectives.

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Recycling & Waste

As anyone who's ever tailgated before a Hawkeye home game or left an empty 12-pack outside their downtown apartment can tell you, very few cans go unrecycled in Iowa City. But what about recycling as a whole?



Big changes, less waste, on the horizon

"The recycling rate is 65 percent in Iowa City," says Jen Jordan, Iowa City's Recycling Coordinator. But she warns, "that's the percentage of residents who have blue bins"—only about half of the city.

"That's not enough," says Jordan. She cites an outdated recycling policy and the lack of "single-stream recycling" as the main culprits for the limited access to curbside recycling programs. Single-stream recycling, where all recyclables can be collected in one bin, would allow the city to serve large multi-unit apartments with fewer resources. But single-stream is also more expensive, she says, "because somebody else has to sort the recycling."

Johnson County's recycling rate is on par with Iowa as a whole, with a Waste Reduction Number of 35 percent. Still, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that as much as 75 percent of our municipal solid waste can be diverted.

While there is plenty of room for improvement, according to BioCycle's 2006 *The State of*

Garbage in America report, Iowa diverted 40.9 percent of its trash from landfills, either by recycling or waste-to-energy measures. Only 15 states posted better numbers.

Gold Star:

Food composting. In 2006, Holly Moriarty, a UI engineering student, kick-started a coordinated effort between the UI and the City to compost pre-consumer food waste from university dining halls. In addition to environmental benefits, the pilot program saves the university \$20 per ton of waste by diverting it from the landfill. The success of food composting convinced the City to ask the State of



Iowa for permission to implement composting city-wide. The application was submitted November 4, 2008, but it will be awhile before curbside collection begins.

Needs Improvement:

Single-stream recycling. In August, the Iowa City City Council gave Jordan the go ahead to implement single-stream within the next 18 months. When Des Moines implemented single-stream in 2008, recycling rates improved 50 percent. Cedar Rapids, which has used single-stream for years, has an 85 percent rate. Unfortunately, you'll still have to haul your glass to a drop-off location.



Transportation

Solo driving is bad for the environment, period. Cars pollute. They take a lot of resources to produce. And driving solo is tantamount to running your washing machine with one pair of dirty pants. So kudos to Iowa Citians for using alternative travel far better than our fellow Americans.

According to U.S. Census data, 10 percent of Iowa City residents commute on foot. That's third best in the nation, behind only State College, Pennsylvania, and Jacksonville, North Carolina. About five percent of Johnson County residents use public transportation to commute, second to Story County in the state of Iowa. In total, 27 percent of Iowa Citians use an alternative commuting method, more than doubling the national average of 12.3 percent.

Census data doesn't track non-work trips, but car ownership records indicate that Iowans still rely heavily on cars throughout the state. According to those numbers, only four states (the Dakotas, Montana and Wyoming) have more vehicles per capita than Iowa (one and a half cars/trucks per person). Of course, rural agricultural states would be expected to lead these rankings, but that doesn't change the fact that—as a state—our auto carbon footprint is a size 14.



All aboard a better commute

Gold Star

Commuting. We're twice as good as the national average in non-auto commuting. But there are only two cities in the United States where driving isn't the primary mode of commuting:

New York and Washington, D.C. Admittedly, we're not facing stiff competition. Give yourself a pat on the back, and then tell your car-driving friends to carpool with a buddy. Our carpool rate of roughly 10 percent is right at the national average, disappointing considering that, between students and staff, over 45,000 area residents are headed to The University of Iowa or the UI Hospitals and Clinics for their commute. The city is also lagging behind in designated bike lanes, a key to making pedal-powered commuting safer and more practical.

Needs Improvement

Rail. There was a time when every town of size in the United States had good rail service. That was decades ago. Since 1955, airlines have supplanted 90 percent of human traffic from a formerly robust rail network. According to the Iowa City Passenger Rail Coalition, the proposed Chicago Flyer rail service would reduce greenhouse emissions by 15 percent per-person-per-mile versus car travel and 50 percent versus air travel.

Water Quality and Conservation

If there's one thing we learned in 2008, Iowans have a tenuous relationship with our water supply.

First the good. The Iowa DNR tells us we've got ample supplies of water in our aquifers in Eastern Iowa. And according to DNR environmental specialist Bill Wyr, "drinking water in Iowa City is consistently delivered in good quality."

That's where the good news starts to become bad news.

"In terms of surface quality across Iowa," explains DNR Land Management bureau chief Tim Hall, "we struggle with the same issues: lakes with bacteria, rivers with bacteria, sediment and nutrient issues."

According to DNR numbers, Iowa's streams rated a score of 40 out of 100 for water quality, earning a grade of "D" for poor health.

The University of Iowa Hygienic Laboratory performs routine monitoring, and Dr. Michael Wichman, associate director of environmental health, notes that "we are increasingly detecting persistent organic pollutants including environmental degradation of pesticides and industrial chemicals in the environment."

Iowa ranks 29th in the number of pounds of reported toxins released in the environment, according to the EPA's 2002 Toxic Release Inventory—which is more concerning when considering Iowa's relatively small surface water area.

According to the EPA, the entire section of the Iowa River that runs through Johnson County is listed as "impaired." Much of this has to do with waters listed as unsupporting of aquatic life.

"Everywhere in the world mussels are in bad shape," said Matt Fisher of the Nature Conservancy. "In Johnson County, Higgins Eye mussels are now federally endangered."



Good from the tap, bad everywhere else

Additionally, some have suggested that the floods last year were intensified by the drainage patterns of area farmland. For the better part of the last decade, local farmers had been encouraged to replant native prairie on excess cropland as part of the Conservation Reserve Program but, with rising grain prices, that land has become too valuable to leave untended and the conservation trend has

reversed.

"From a peak of about 23,400 acres the figure has dropped down to 20,381 acres," says Wendell Jones of the Johnson County Soil and Water Conservation District. All of that means more runoff in our already-taxed watersheds.

Gold Star:

Drinking water. Even during the flood, Iowa City continued to deliver clean, potable drinking water. And Johnson County wells are, pardon the pun, well-tested. That means we can drink the tap water and stop buying bottled water, which costs up to 1,000 times more than tap water, leaches toxic additives, consumes unnecessary oil and requires roughly six times as much water to produce as ends up inside the bottle.

Needs Improvement:

Research. We're an ag state, so we'll likely always have trouble with pesticides and nutrients in our waters. But, according to Dr. Wichman at the UI Hygienic Lab, routine monitoring of environmental contaminants would help us "develop a better picture of the effects that human activity has on our environment and, conversely, the effects that exposure to chemicals in our environment may have on human health." **IV**

Andrew Sherburne is publisher of Little Village.

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Slow ripen

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Julia Longwing

Being an Iowan, the only butterfly I can ever remember crossing paths with is the beautiful Monarch. They used to hover around my flowerpots and get stuck on my windshield, but as of late, the population has been disappearing due to shifts in the environment and unfortunate human interferences. In need of a flying beauty fix, I headed to Ames to explore the butterfly house I'd heard so much about.



Winged Wonders

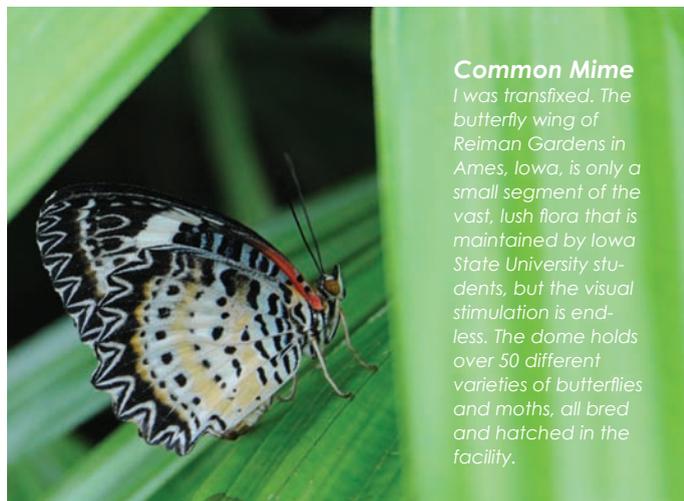
Lime Butterfly

A kind older woman guided me through the two doors leading to the room filled with flying creatures, making sure to explain the rules of engagement: Don't touch, and watch your step.



Common Mime

I was transfixed. The butterfly wing of Reiman Gardens in Ames, Iowa, is only a small segment of the vast, lush flora that is maintained by Iowa State University students, but the visual stimulation is endless. The dome holds over 50 different varieties of butterflies and moths, all bred and hatched in the facility.



Owl Butterfly

I made many circles though the tiny area, trying to photograph as many different creatures as possible. Some butterflies never landed, deservedly too nervous that some youngin' would grab them by the wings. Others perched in one place for endless amounts of time, blending into their surroundings and not moving a centimeter as I hovered.



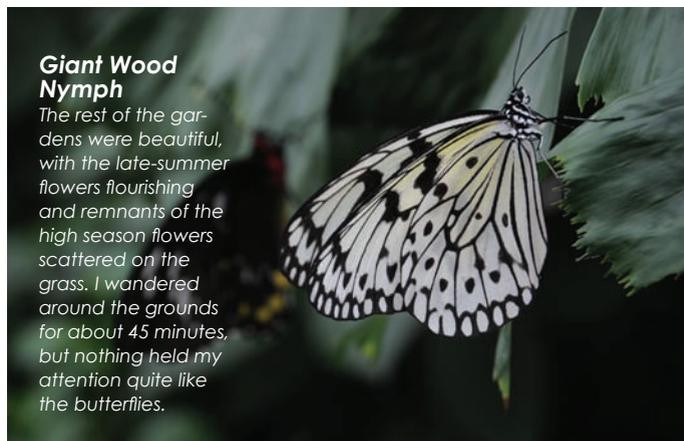
Emerald Swallow

People sat on benches and stared up at the ceiling, unmoving for long periods of time. Others moved back and forth on the tiny path, bumping into each other with eyes only for the butterflies. Kids ran around with their arms outstretched.



Giant Wood Nymph

The rest of the gardens were beautiful, with the late-summer flowers flourishing and remnants of the high season flowers scattered on the grass. I wandered around the grounds for about 45 minutes, but nothing held my attention quite like the butterflies.



QUIT TALKING!

(start writing)

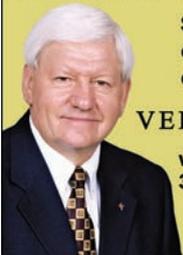
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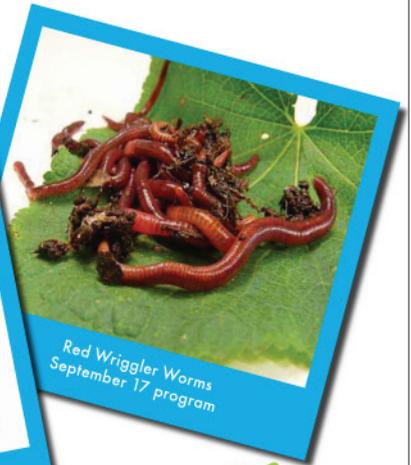
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UPCOMING EVENTS

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SEPTEMBER 17

Indoor Composting with Worms

Fred Meyer and Roxanne Mitten. 7:00 p.m. Room A
Worm Kit Distribution \$25.00 for a kit with worms

SEPTEMBER 21

Sense of Wonder

Film on the life of Rachel Carson. 7:00 p.m. Room A

SEPTEMBER 24

Energy Efficiency in Your Home

How MidAmerican Energy can help increase efficiency and lower your costs. John O'Roake, Energy Efficiency Manager. 7:00 p.m. Room A

SEPTEMBER 26

Pharmaceutical Collection

The Nest parking lot at Sycamore Mall. 1500 Sycamore Drive. 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

OCTOBER 1

Making your older home more Energy Efficient

Thomas McInerney, Architect. 7:00 p.m. Room A

OCTOBER 8

Growing Local Foods - Growing Healthy Communities

Local Foods Panel Discussion. 7:00 p.m. Room A
Regenia Bailey, Scott Koepeke, Kyle Sieck, Laura Dowd, James Nisley

OCTOBER 8

Animal Vegetable Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver

One Community One Book discussion. Pat Schnack, discussion leader. 8:00 p.m. Room A



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Not Ridin' Dirty

Just over a year ago, Veema Patel visited her brother Vikram in Iowa City. Then living in Austin, Texas, she had grown accustomed to seeing three-wheeled bike taxis—called pedicabs—around town.

“While I was here, I noticed how perfectly designed Iowa City is for bike cabs,” the 20-year-old says. “It’s walkable, bikable, people live within easy distances.”

She and Vikram, a UI physics graduate student, talked then about starting their own pedicab business, not thinking it would happen. But then when Veema decided to transfer to the UI to study Geography (she’ll be a junior this fall), the pair revisited the idea.

“Basically, we wanted to live in a city that had them,” Veema says, glancing at Vikram, who adds, “So we did it.”

Now, after nearly three months in operation, their IC Ecocabs pedicab service has become a part of the downtown Iowa City landscape. Veema and Vikram, along with their one employee, Jacob Sawyer, operate two pedicabs—which look a little like the lovechild of a Ferris-wheel seat and an upright bicycle—Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, two nights apiece.

Vikram estimates they give three rides an hour within their transportation radius: Church Street on the north to Bowery Street on the south, and Clinton Street on the west

Like auto taxicabs, the city regulates pedicab services

to Johnson or Governor on the east (“I go to Johnson, and he goes to Governor,” Veema says with a smile.) The cabs fit three people who are “comfortable” with each other, Vikram says, and their customers vary from families to the 2 a.m. crowd.

“Business has been good,” the 25-year-old says, adding that they are considering expanding service once school begins this fall. “We’re not going to get rich doing it, but it’s worth our while.”



Co-owner Vikram Patel, employee Jacob Sawyer and co-owner Veema Patel are getting quite a workout on their Iowa City pedicabs.

Some might be surprised to hear of the success when they hear about the pay scale: it’s whatever you want. And while this practice does occasionally lead to some interesting barter (“One time a guy tried to give me a pound of beef,” Veema says. “Another time someone brought a Pancheros burrito.”), the philosophy fits with Veema and Vikram’s goals for the business.

“We decided the pay-what-you-want model would work best for us because we have such a wide variety of customers,” Veema says. “We want everybody to be able to enjoy the service. They enjoy themselves, so they pay what they think it’s worth. Sometimes people pay who don’t even take rides because they like it.”

“And sometimes people really can’t pay much, and if that’s the case we’re totally cool,” Vikram adds.

Long a common form of transportation in Asian cities, the pedicab is growing in popularity in the United States.

Steve Meyer, owner of Denver-based Main

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IC Ecocabs will continue operating “until it gets cold,” probably mid-October, and resume service in the spring.

Street Pedicab, has seen his business expand from local to worldwide since he began in 1992—he ships pedicabs around the world to countries like Spain and Australia. Particularly in the last 10 years, Meyer says, bike taxis have begun to serve as an intermediate form of transportation between walking and driving for downtowns trying to become pedestrian friendly.

“Progressive cities allow pedicabs,” Meyer

said. "I think urban planners started recognizing that the more cars there are speeding through downtown areas, the worse it is for the business. If we are going to have a successful downtown, we are going to have more congestion for cars."

Veema and Vikram said starting their Pedicab business in Iowa City was remarkably painless. They were surprised to find that Iowa City was prepared: Like auto taxicabs, the city regulates pedicab services, requiring operators to have things like insurance, a license and regular vehicle inspections.

"It really comes down to the City of Iowa City making this type of development a priority," Veema says.

While City Urban Planner Karen Howard was not aware of IC Ecocabs, she said Iowa City has always tried to be pedestrian friendly.

Payment? Whatever you think it's worth.

"One time a guy
tried to give me
a pound of beef,"
Veema says.

"We have a lot of policies in place that support pedestrian areas," she said, noting the city's "complete street" policy, which requires that any new or renovated roadway provide for all forms of transportation, whether it be cars, bikes, buses or pedestrians. "And of course, we have one of only a handful of successful pedestrian malls in the country."

While Veema says that she thinks the new environmental focus of the Obama

Administration certainly hasn't hurt their chances for success with such an eco-friendly business, Meyer says he thinks the expansion would have taken place even without the national green push.

"It's a natural human tendency to try to improve the environment we live in," he says. "I think making cities more pedestrian friendly is a natural way to improve the urban environment. Without talking about carbon, I think it just makes it pleasant for people."

And really, that's what Vikram and Veema what people to take away from their pedicab ride: "This is really fun," Vikram says.

"You know how when you take a cab sometimes you talk to the cab driver, sometimes you don't?" Veema asks. "I'd say 98 percent of the time they talk to us." Smiling, she adds, "I just moved here, but I know a lot of people downtown—as the bike lady, but, you know." **IV**

Maggie Anderson is an Iowa native who recently relocated to Washington, D.C. She misses the Midwestern greenery and bountiful fresh produce, but she likes that she can walk to the White House.



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>> G-LIST FROM PAGE 11

"The library is the ultimate recycling of information and resources. Ultimately I hope the groups that learn about each other continue to

"The library is the ultimate recycling of information and resources."

—Maeve Clark

Iowa City Public Library

work together, which I think they will," Clark said. "The other thing that's exciting is the more people you get together the more ideas you have. It's amazing what you get when you start brainstorming."

The library hopes to host an array of events as well, including gardening workshops through Backyard Abundance, biking and carpooling to save gas and turning rain water into garden water.

The communication and collaboration between agencies has been the biggest highlight, Clark and Jordan said, and now the future looks a little brighter with those connections established.

"The events are somewhat well-timed because people are very excited about what's going on in the green revolution right now. I think this grant was a spark to get everyone to work together and communicate," Jordan said. "The more people we can get on board and the more they see each other doing things, the more that's possible. It's really a community experience." **IV**

Erin Tiesman is a graduate of The University of Iowa School of Journalism & Mass Communication. Her interests in writing include women's issues, religion and community.



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No mom, I'm just going green

Maybe a little creative thinking is all you really need to live a greener lifestyle.

Lately, my mother's been giving me a hard time about the direction of my life, or as she calls it, the steady downward spiral of ruin. In her eyes, quitting your job, drinking heavily, watching television six hours a day, eating only one type of food, and repelling the company of single men are all habits of failure. Geeze mom, open your mind. I'm just "going green." Slovenly unemployment is the best thing you can do for the environment, especially in this economy. Allow me to take you point by point, as we view my life through green colored glasses.

MOM'S VIEW: I've quit a great job with steady salary.

GOING GREEN VIEW: Please. With my newfound freedom, I no longer drive to work every day (which is good, 'cause I can't afford a car). Even with my measly two-mile commute, in one year I'm saving 70 gallons of gas and 1610 pounds of CO₂ emissions by walking or biking my lazy butt around.

Plus, with no boss to impress, showering and doing laundry are no longer necessary. Huge savings! Yes, it's true that I could simply take shorter showers and save 730 gallons/year for every minute shaved off my average showering time. And ok, I suppose I could get a clothes drying rack and reduce my total monthly electricity usage by 6 to 20 percent. But with so many bars in this town, who's got the time? Which leads me to my next point.

MOM'S VIEW: I'm drinking too much tequila.

GOING GREEN VIEW: Let's say I go out to the bars and have a few drinks. When I get home (again walking, not driving) I may feel the call of nature. Instead of wasting away our fresh water supply with the modern toilet, I can respond to the call in the pure, natural way! In my loosened state of being I say: peeing outside? No problem! That's an immediate fresh water savings of 4.75 gallons. Stay drunk all the time and you're up to 150 gallons

in a week. Yes, it's also true that I could install an indoor composting toilet or low flow toilet to save about 9,000 gallons per year, or simply follow the "let it mellow" philosophy, but those methods don't involve me singing "Take On Me" at the Deadwood while I wrap my pink boa around a group of large bearded men.

MOM'S VIEW: I've been watching ungodly hours of television.

GOING GREEN VIEW: Sure, I watched an entire season of the mediocre high school detective show "Veronica Mars" in three days, but I'm just making the most of our energy sources. About 75 percent of the energy used by small appliances (like televisions) is sucked out when they're not being used. Some people like to plug those things into a power strip which can be easily turned off when not in use. My (superior) solution? Never let them be out of use! That way there's no waste.

MOM'S VIEW: I've got poor eating habits.

GOING GREEN VIEW: How hard is it to understand that living on hummus and potato chips totally eliminates the need for a dishwasher? Plus, being a hippie vegan is a great way to show the earth some love. After all, it takes around 2,500 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef (that's six months of showering), and only 24 gallons to produce a pound of potatoes. On the land it takes to produce enough Veal Osso Bucco for one person, you could feed 22 people on potatoes, 19 on rice or 17 on corn. *And* it takes up to 16 pounds of grain to produce one pound of edible animal flesh (mmm, flesh). Can we say "inefficient distribution of global resources?" No, scratch that. How about just "lame."

Secondly, I don't understand why the "buy

It takes around 2,500 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef, and only 24 gallons to produce a pound of potatoes.

fresh, buy local" food campaign doesn't apply to dumpster diving. Some grocery stores, like the New Pioneer Co-op will post signs that tell how far your food traveled to get to you, since local produce

has a lower carbon footprint. But when I fish a blackened banana out of the dumpster behind my house, I can count the steps it traveled to get to my house. How's that for precision?

When I'm done eating, I like to compost. Or, as my unenlightened neighbors call it, "leave garbage all over the lawn."

More about:

Environmental effects of meat production: www.goveg.com/environment.asp

Iowa City Local Food: www.localfoodsconnection.org

Energy Savings: www.energysavers.gov

Water Savings: www.h2ouse.org

CO₂ emissions: www.carbonify.com

Composting: compostinstructions.com

Composting Toilet: www.compostingtoilet.org

Go Green Wiki: tiptheplanet.com

MOM'S VIEW: I'm repelling eligible single men.

GOING GREEN VIEW: Apparently the local gentlemen don't dig the greasy hair look and dumpster banana breath. But my celibacy is doing wonders for the environment, since I'm fairly certain that the "reduce, reuse, recycle" mantra is not applicable to condoms. Yes, the latex ones do biodegrade as long as you don't flush them, and some might say that condoms help the environment by lessening the number of American babies, who use 35

times the resources of Indian babies and create 13 times the environmental damage of Brazilian babies, but I'm pretty sure the negative effects of the un-recyclable foil wrappers far outweigh this.

So there you have it, Mom—the social cause behind my shiftless indolence. I'm not "throwing away my \$200,000 education," I'm saving the earth. You might want to try it, too. **lv**

Lorin Ditzler is a grad student in urban planning at The University of Iowa. She likes banjos, Indian food and embarrassing herself.

Pet liner



Newsprint is not the best litter box material, but for small rodents and birds, it is an eco (and wallet) friendly solution.

>> SCHOOL FROM PAGE 9

School Is In

Josie Cotton, 1983

This lesser-known power pop track from the Valley Girl soundtrack (by Josie Cotton of "Johnny Are you Queer?" semi-fame) gets an A+ for its use of proper grammar and avoidance of lazy contractions in the title.

High School

MC5, 1970

After jettisoning the pre-fab '60s radical image created by manager John Sinclair, this track was a highlight of Back in the USA, a return-to-the-basics record bookended by a Little Richard and Chuck Berry track.

Cool Senior High School (Fight Song)

The Nation of Ulysses, 1991

Though they never matched their insane, frenetic stage show on record, this whirling der-

vish of a punk song was a highlight of 13-Point Plan to Destroy America.



U-Mass

Pixies, 1991

I have to give a shout-out to this song, because I love the Pixies and I got my Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts, where frontman Black Francis attended. Sample lyric: "It's Educational!"

School's Out

Alice Cooper, 1972

"School's out forever." Sadly, for me, it is not. Not until I retire. **lv**

Kembrew McLeod is readying his co-produced documentary Copyright Criminals for a premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival on September 19, and a broadcast premiere on PBS's Independent Lens later in January.

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Ponyo

Perfectly Illustrated

Yes, a number of good filmmakers are still at work, but what with the atomization of screen-watchers and deep idiocy of Hollywood production, it's easy for a moviegoer to see current history as a steep decline if not a suicidal free fall. The one big exception is animation, which has entered its golden age. In my view, Pixar has outclassed Walt Disney; independent movies like *Waltz with Bashir* capture larger swatches of reality than any

currently working camera; and arguably the greatest living filmmaker happens to be Hayao Miyazaki, who is largely responsible for raising anime into an art form. His latest feature *Ponyo* has been given the deluxe treatment by Disney (dubbed by the likes of Cate Blanchett and Matt Damon) and has just been released in the United States.

Miyazaki movies are known for their rich sense of fantasy, but what makes him such a superb filmmaker is his ability to reconcile a

myth-making imagination with a profound vision of how things are. Film as a medium contains two contradictory capacities: it can create an over-the-top spectacle, and it can seem transparently true to life. Miyazaki utilizes these paradoxical aspects of film, often simultaneously. There is a brief scene in *Ponyo*, where Sôsuke, the five-year-old protagonist, goes down to the beach and kicks off his shoes to wade into the waves. The automatic motion of Sôsuke's feet in relationship to his intense gaze into the water is as evocative of reality as anything in Vittorio De Sica or Yasujiro Ozu films. The boy then finds a goldfish in the water and carries her off, as the waves form into living beings that rise menacingly up to recap-

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ture her. It is a moment of intense reality and stillness, yet it swells with imagination and horror and excitement. Miyazaki strings his stories of such moments. Sōsuke observes the sea's strange behavior, dodges the suddenly living waves, and remarks, "Weird."

Although Ponyo ends as happily as any three-year-old could wish, it harbors a pretty bleak lesson for adults...at that moment in the theater the collective gasp of the moms generated wind.

At the root of *Ponyo* is the same mythic structure as is expressed in Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*, but Miyazaki has reworked it according to the dictates of his imagination such that attributing the movie to the fairy tale is like attributing *King Lear* to *The Goose-Girl at the Well*. The story of *Ponyo*, like all true myths, is relatively complex, seemingly absurd, and yet immediately sensible to anyone over the age of three. Basically, a five-year-old boy finds a goldfish who wants to be human, he calls her Ponyo, and their love for each other saves the earth from destruction.

Like all his movies, the locale of *Ponyo*, a seaside village in Japan, feels overwhelmingly real: its bluff feels immediately like a bluff you've descended, its school seems situated in just the right relation to the nursing home, you could swear you've driven on its roads. Though Miyazaki has dabbled in computer animation, he relied solely on the human hand for *Ponyo*; and the loving feel for real-

ity immediately recalls his greatest work, *My Neighbor Totoro*.

The general consensus about *Ponyo* is that it is a masterpiece but not Miyazaki's best, which I find niggling. I think part of the reason a paper-thin misgiving is attached to all the praise lies in how Miyazaki has worked out another element of his vision of nature. First of all, the apocalypse that so many of his films obsess over is forestalled not by magic, but by a sheer act of will, a marriage vow between a five-year-old and a goldfish. Acts of will just don't play as well as magic.

Second, although *Ponyo* ends as happily as any three-year-old could wish, it harbors a pretty bleak lesson for adults. The mother of Sōsuke takes a miraculous leap of faith and abandons her kindergartner in the midst of a storm so that she can care for the residents of an old people's home. At that moment in the theater the collective gasp of the moms generated wind. Yet the movie makes clear that the mother's complete faith in her son is praiseworthy and necessary for the happy ending. The bleak point is that most everyone over the age of five is too corrupted by our society to teach the coming generation what is necessary to save the planet. We must simply trust them to embrace both their own human nature as well as the more primordial nature out of which our race has emerged. Having children is a marvelous reason to watch Miyazaki movies (my personal favorites are *Porco Rosso*, *Totoro*, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, and *Castle in the Sky*), because they give you an excuse to open up the valves of the imagination. But just because you don't have to buy tickets for kids is no reason to miss Miyazaki's films. Every now and then, a story appeals to children not because they haven't grown up, but because the story's imaginative roots are just that deep. **lv**

Scott Samuelson teaches philosophy at Kirkwood Community College. He is also sometimes a moderator on KCRG's "Ethical Perspectives on the News" and sometimes a cook at Simone's Plain and Simple, the French restaurant in the middle of nowhere.



Get creative!

Make Miyazaki proud and create some art. Start easy and draw mustaches on faces or doodle in the margins. Or, use it to

protect tables for messy crafts. Ready for some real art? Newsprint has been a craft staple for years—a perfect material for kite making, origami, or paper mache. If your art doesn't turn out well, it still makes great kindling for a fire.

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The Half Hearts

After the Flood

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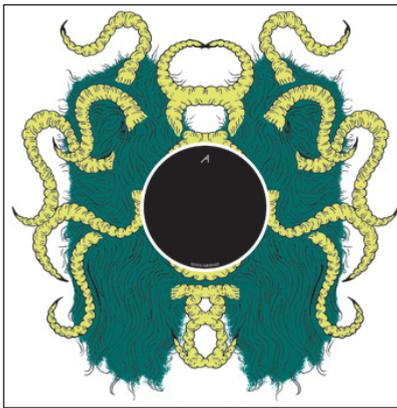
The Half Hearts is primarily a vehicle for the songs of former Iowa Citian Flip Arkulary. *After the Flood* was recorded literally after the flood in the summer of 2008 at Flat Black Studio. Acoustic songs are interleaved between electric ones, but they share a single sensibility: earnest and openhearted. For a guy named Flip he seems uncontaminated with flippancy or irony.

Musically, the emphasis is on a wide, warm guitar sound combined with subliminal drumming and low-key bass. There's nothing flashy going on instrumentally, and the 'cello on "Sister Irene" and electric piano on *After the Flood* are welcome changes in texture. "Sister Irene" stands out both for its vaguely baroque melody and its subject, a nun who runs away from the church.

I'm generally not a fan of Arkulary's lyrical talents. It's not an issue on, for example, "Three Wolves" which doesn't really reach for any particular message, and is carried by the melody and arrangement. But on the acoustic ballads like "Allison" their flatness and lack of

original imagery sink an otherwise appealing song, and "Sister Irene" is nearly sunk by non sequiturs like "The blood of Christ flows from the wine" and "but 'til that time I'll sing in a rhyme." Aside from needing some editorial feedback on lyrics, this is an appealing album, with a nice folk-rock feeling to it.

Kent Williams is an optimist who loves life, sport, and hates lies. He is Little Village's arts editor.



Aseethe/ Shores of the Tundra

Split 12-inch

Scenster Credentials

myspace.com/aseethecreation

myspace.com/shoresofthetundra

A relatively recent strain of metal, steeped in the hardcore punk music of '80s and the sludgy drone of the Melvins, has dropped the mythic beasts, and most of the satanic leanings of the genre's forebearers to become a sort of "art metal"—if such a thing were ever imaginable. Iowa City's Aseethe and Shores of the

Tundra—each of whom has a side on this new 12-inch split from Scenster Credentials—share an emphasis on bottom-heavy mixes with masterful rhythmic variation, instrumental intricacy. Both outfits utilize drum machines rather than a live drummer.

The one-man demolition team of Brian Barr, aka Aseethe, specializes in moody, dense soundscapes—the suspenseful mounting tension before the ground splits below you and Hell swallows you whole. Aseethe's side is populated by overdriven baritone guitar-flogging cut with zonks and swells from a synthesizer. Barr saves his soulless yelps until the last few minutes of the 13-minute epic "Fire to Flames," capping off an almost beautiful build flush with piano runs and wheezing synth stabs which punctuate an almost incessant death march of guitar and drums. The climax to a taut, extended epic.

Shores of the Tundra's side is less of a slow build up to a medieval struggle and more like three well-plotted night raids: brutal and precise. The duo leans a bit more industrial (children of Nine Inch Nails, siblings to Genghis Tron) relying on more heavily on a drum machine and getting all the digitized guts and glory possible from a synthesizer. Shores also circumvents gradual almost entirely. Opening cut "Cities End Times" goes from an eerie, grainy pulse to a full-on torrent of mechanized drumming, hulking power chords, and deathly howls. The formula works impeccably well, and the second track, "Everything," follows suit. "This World Breaks Like Glass" is a more languid number. Arpeggiated guitar runs build the low-lying track before calculated bursts of brutality.

John Schlotfeld has exhausted his critical metal vocabulary. Contact him to share more brutal adjectives at John.Schlotfeld@littlevillage.com.

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Why Make Clocks

These Things Are Ours

www.whymakeclocks.net

Why Make Clocks come from Des Moines, so I will start this review with obligatory ridicule: Des Moines is a city the Interstate gives a wide berth, whose main cultural advantage is Tasty Tacos, where you can sleep peacefully in the middle of a downtown street on a weekend night. Gertrude Stein said of Oakland, California, that there is “no there there.” Of Des Moines one can say there’s no Oakland there. I guess if you’re a Des Moines musician, you have plenty of time to hone your craft, as there’s fuck all else to do.

Why Make Clocks have filled the empty hours productively, crafting a collection of songs chock full of pop goodness. They namecheck Guided By Voices as an influence, but aside from a penchant for clever twists and turns in their song structure and arrangements, they are completely different. GBV revels in the low-fi hit-and-run recording. Why Make Clocks take great pains to polish their sound, but they do it without studio fakery. Singer/songwriter Dan Hutchison has a voice that recalls Steve Winwood’s, so maybe Traffic would be a better name to check when discussing Why Make Clocks. They aren’t afraid to rock out, but when they do, it’s in the context of a substantial and intricately constructed song.

Two epic songs, “Self Impressions” and “Sometimes,” bookend the album. “Self Impression” is a ballad played Pink Floyd slow, and “Sometimes” is slightly faster. Both couch Hutchinson’s earnest vocals in a thick bed of warm distorted guitars, and both build to satisfying musical climaxes. “Sometimes” is replete with multiple bridge sections and an extended guitar freak out. This is the sort of rock music that punk tried to kill off at the end of the ‘70s, but Why Make Clocks put it across without the bloated excess and coked-up narcissism. As such, they’re pretty much awesome.

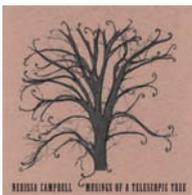
Kent Williams

Nerissa Campbell

Musings of a Telescopic Tree
Crooked Mouth Music

www.nerissacampbell.com

Marvin Bell’s poem To Dorothy begins «You are not beautiful, exactly. You are beautiful, inexactly.» I thought of it when listening to Nerissa Campbell’s album, because she’s a jazz singer, inexactly. She has absorbed jazz vocal techniques but finds her own way around a



melody, eschewing the cheap flourishes lesser singers can’t resist. Her songwriting recalls Tom Waits, but her voice is clear and sweet where his is grumbly and rough. Born and raised in Perth, Australia, she met and married an Iowa boy in New York City, whom we can thank for bringing her back here. She’ll be performing September 16 at the Mill.

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Final Alibi, Worst Case Scenario, Artifex Pereo

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Creative Connections-Artists in Action with Kathryn Hagy, Sept. 12 • Norman Rockwell: Fact & Fiction, opens Sept. 12 • Malvina Hoffman, ongoing • Mauricio Lasansky, ongoing • Art in Roman Life, ongoing • Grant Wood: In Focus, ongoing

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www.hudsonrivergallery.com
 Tom Langdon, ongoing

Iowa Artisans Gallery

207 E. Washington, Iowa City
www.iowa-artisans-gallery.com

Wings & Whimsy: Recent Drawings & Dolls by Emily J.G. Vermillion, opens Sept. 3

Johnson County Historical Society

310 5th St., Coralville
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Me, Myslef and Hayden, opens Sept. 4 • Floods of 2008: Photographs, ongoing

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www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap

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Sept. 12, Noon-5:30pm, Upper City Park; 8pm-close the Mill
WWW.prairievoices.net

Now in its 16th year, the Iowa Women's Music Festival continues to bring major-name women musicians to grace the Upper City Park stages with their goddessnesses. Michelle Shocked headlines City Park's free Saturday lineup, which is emceed by Kim-Char Meredith, veteran of the IWMF. The festival continues at the Mill Saturday night with a performance by said emcee, followed by Leslie and the Ly's (that is Ames-native Leslie Hall—of gem-dazzled sweater fame), Cedar Rapids '80s cover band the Jodie Foster Connection, dance party and finally a jam session. Friday night brings Queer Queen of Comedy Poppy Champlin and Davenport rocker Lojo Russo to Old Brick. Sliding scale donations accepted for the Old Brick and Mill performances.

Norman Rockwell: Fact & Fiction

The American Century Exhibits open September 12
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
www.crma.org

Ah, America.

This month, the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art (what's a 30-minute drive?) will feature two staples of its idea of the American experience: Norman Rockwell and, well, everything else. On September 12, two exhibits will begin—the impermanent "Norman Rockwell: Fact & Fiction" (until Jan. 3, 2010) and the permanent "The American Century."

Rockwell's work, with his mostly quiet depictions of what he considered "quint-essential" American life, will find a home amongst the Cedar Rapidians that he visited 65 years ago to help craft his vision of the Midwest. It will join "The American Century" (the 20th) in celebrating what the CRMA calls the time "in which American art came to dominate the art world." Surely it cannot encapsulate all of our strange movements, but certainly it's worth a try.

Public Space One

115 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.myspace.com/publicspaceone
 Arrington de Dioniso (of Old Time Relijun), the Legendary Trio, Twelve Canons, Sept. 5 • Casiotone For the Painfully Alone, Sept. 10 • Little Gold, Best Friends Forever, Sept. 15 • Ember Shrag, Ed Gray, Eloine, Spet. 19, 10pm • The J, Executives, Molly Ringwald, Spet. 22 • You and Yourn, Sept. 24 • Rademacher, Sept. 25

Riverside Casino

3184 Highway 22, Riverside
www.riversidecasinoandresort.com
 Boz Scaggs, Sept. 25, 8pm

Scope Productions

scope.uiowa.edu
 Lupe Fiasco, Hubbard Park, Sept. 3, 8pm • Wilco, Oct. 1, 7:30pm

University of Iowa Music Dept

calendar.uiowa.edu
See website for locations
 Opus Two—William Terwilliger, violin; Andrew Cooperstock, piano, Sept. 4, 7:30pm • Cello Daze, Sept. 12, 7:30pm • Cello Daze, Sept. 13, 3:00pm • "Ecoute," Norman Spivey, baritone, Sept. 17, 7:30pm • Maia Quartet, Sept. 25, 7:30pm • Center for New Music, Sept. 27, 7:30pm • UI Symphony Orchestra, Sept. 30, 7:30pm • CAB MUSIC at West Side Block Party, Sept. 4, 5:00pm • Imani Winds and Stefan Harris (music), Sept. 25, 7:30pm

Uptown Bill's Small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City
www.uptownbills.org
Open Mic, Fridays, 8pm; Sign-up, 7:30pm

Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City
www.iowacityyachtclub.org
Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted
 Yacht Club, Minstrel Studios & Fat Tire Battle of the Bands II, Sept. 3, 8pm • Nevermind and Nifty Mountain PowWow, Sept. 4 • Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Sept. 5 • The New Mastersounds, Sept. 9, 8pm • Yacht Club • Minstrel Studios • Yacht Club, Minstrel Studios & Fat Tire Battle of the Bands II, Sept. 10, 8pm • Kyle Hollingsworth Band (String Cheese Incident) and Euforquestra, Sept. 11 • Uniphonics and The Blend, Sept. 12 • Yacht Club, Minstrel Studios & Fat Tire Battle of the Bands II, Sept. 17, 8pm • Dead Larry, The Herbert Wiser Band, The Workshy, Sept. 18 • Heatbox, Sept. 19 • Yacht Club, Minstrel Studios & Fat Tire Battle of the Bands II, Sept. 24, 8pm • White Water Ramble, Sept. 25 • 5 in a Hand, Sept. 26

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**** DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS ****



UPCOMING SHOWS

- SEPT 5 } WILLY PORTER
- SEPT 9 } TITUS ANDONICUS
- SEPT 11 } DEER TICK
- SEPT 13 } JOE JACK TALCUM (OF THE DEAD MILKMEN)
- SEPT 17 } TYRONE WELLS
- SEPT 18 } RICHARD BUCKNER
- SEPT 25 } JOE & VICKI PRICE

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- SEP 3 RIDERS IN THE SKY
- SEP 8 COMEDY FOR CHARITY
- SEP 11 RIFF RAFF: ELEKTRA
- SEP 17 DAVE MASON
- OCT 2 TIM BEDORE
- OCT 7 LEON REDBONE
- OCT 8 SARA WATKINS of NICKEL CREEK
- OCT 20 THE AVETT BROTHERS
- OCT 21 LINDSAY MAC BAND
- OCT 22 ROBIN & LINDA WILLIAMS
- OCT 23 KELLER WILLIAMS
- NOV 6 CHAMPIONS OF THE DANCE
- NOV 7 BROKEN LIZARD
- NOV 14 PAULA POUNDSTONE
- DEC 10 BIG BAD VOODOO DADDY
- DEC 13 BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA

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THEATER/DANCE/ PERFORMANCE

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.englert.org

Comedy For Charity, Sept. 8, 7pm • Camelot, Sept. 24-27

Iowa Theatre Artists

4709 220th Tr., Amana
www.iowatheatreartists.org

Smoke on the Mountain, through Sept. 6 • Foxfire, Sept. 17-27

Penguin's Comedy Club

Clarion Hotel, 525 33rd Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids
www.penguinscomedyclub.com

Check website for showtimes

Tim Cavanagh and Mark Poolos, Sept. 4-5 • Gabriel Rutledge and Joe Zimmerman, Sept. 11-12 • Tom Mabe, Sept. 18-19 • Greg Hahn and Tim Sullivan, Sept. 24

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City
www.riversidetheatre.org

A Dog's Life, opens Sept. 11

Summit Restaurant Comedy Night

10 S. Clinton St, Iowa City
www.thesummitrestaurantandbar.com

Shows start at 9:30pm

Bill Hildebrandt, Jamey Stone, Sept. 2 • The Sandman, Sept. 9 • Steven Hirst, Luke Swanson, Sept. 16 • Dave Dyer, Nicholas Anthony, Sept. 23 • Mike Smith, Austin Anderson, Sept. 30

Theatre Cedar Rapids

4444 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids
www.theatrecrec.org

Altar Boyz, Sept. 11-27

WORDS

Barnes & Noble

Coral Ridge Mall
1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville
The Writers Workshop, Sept. 10 & 24, 7pm

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City
www.prairielightbooks.com

All shows at 7pm unless otherwise noted

Benjamin Nugent, Sept. 2 • Iowa Review, at Old Capitol, Sept. 3 • Matt McCue, Sept. 8 • Fflur Dafydd, Sept. 9 • John Koethe, Sept. 10

University Museum of Art

www.uiowa.edu/uima
Check website for locations

Levitt Craft Lecture: Kurt Weise, Sept. 17, 8pm • "Word Painter" Reading: Cheyenne Nimes, Ryan Van Meter, Sept. 24, 7:30pm

CINEMA

Alexis Park Inn

1165 S. Riverside Drive, Iowa City
www.alexisparkinn.com

Aviaton Movie Night, Sept. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 6:30pm

Bijou Theatre

IMU, UI Campus, Iowa City
www.bijoutheatre.org

Sin Nombre, Outrage, Aug. 28-Sept. 3 • The Brothers Bloom, Humpday, Sept. 4-10 • Food, Inc., Moon, Sept. 11-17 • Away We Go, Sonny Chiba, Manhattan Short Film Festival, Sept. 18-24 • Goddard Double Feature: Made in USA, 2 or 3 Things I Know About Her, Sept. 25-Oct. 1

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.englert.org

The Graduate, Sept. 6, 7pm • Riff Raff Theater: Electra, Sept. 11, 8pm • Fight Club, Sept. 13, 9pm

PATV

206 Lafayette St., Iowa City
www.patv.tv

Bike-in Theater, Best and Worst Horror Movies, thursdays beginning Sept. 10

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History

Macbride Hall, UI Campus
www.uiowa.edu/~nathist

A Sense of Wonder, Sept. 13, 2pm • The World's Greatest Fair, Sept. 27, 2pm

KIDS

Barnes & Nobles

Coral Ridge Mall
1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville

Storytime readings at 10am unless otherwise noted
Rabbits, Sept. 1 • Silliness Day, Sept. 3 • Maisy in Character, Sept. 5, 2pm • Houses, Sept. 8 • Grandparents' Day, Sept. 11 • Imaginary Friends, Sept. 15 • Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs, Sept. 18 • First Day of Fall, Sept. 22 • Little Golden Books, Sept. 25 • Bugs, Sept. 29

The Iowa Children's Museum

1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville
www.theicm.org

Art Adventures 2pm unless otherwise noted

AA: Soundpainting, Sept. 5, 1pm • AA: Rain Makers, Sept. 12 • Take Flight Exhibit opens Sept. 22 • Family Free Night, Sept. 25 • AA: Fun Flying Airplanes, Sept. 26

Iowa City Public Library

123 South Linn St. Iowa City
www.icpl.org

Storytime at 10:30 Mon-Sat, 2pm Sun

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History

Macbride Hall, UI Campus
www.uiowa.edu/~nathist

Fossil Guy: T-Rex, Big Bully, Sept 19, 2pm • Animal Tales Story Time: Bison and the Prairie, Sept. 20 • Fossil Guy: When Giant Ground Sloths Roamed, Sept. 26, 2pm

MISC

Coralville Farmers' Market

Community Center, Coralville
Every Monday and Thursday, 5pm

Critical Hit Games

89 Second St, Coralville
www.criticalhitgames.net
Board Game Night, Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23

Millstream Brewing Co.

835 48th Ave., Amana
www.millstreambrewing.com
Festival of Iowa Beers, Sept. 6, 1-5pm

Fry Fest

Iowa River Landing, Coralville
www.fryfest.com
All-day festival and music: Jake Owen, Charlie Daniels Band and the Outlaws, Sept. 4, 9am-11pm

Iowa City Farmers' Market

Chauncey Swan Parking Lot
Wednesday, 5:30pm and Saturdays, 7:30am-noon

PATV

206 Lafayette St., Iowa City
www.patv.tv
The Smartest Iowan game show Wednesdays, contestants needed, email smartestiowan@gmail.com
Guidelines, Sept. 6, 2:30pm • Intro to DJ-ing, Sept. 4 & 19, 1-5pm

U.S. Cellular Center

370 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids
www.uscellularcenter.com
Papa Duke, Sept. 11, 7:30pm • Barbary Coast Dixieland Band, Sept. 22, 7:30pm

Curses, Foiled Again

- Alaska State Troopers said Stacey J. Captain, 18, was driving a Dodge Dakota that burst into flames, but he was nowhere to be found when they responded. While a witness was giving her statement to troopers, she noticed someone, later identified as Captain, stealing her Chevy Blazer. The Daily News-Miner reported the troopers gave chase, but the driver abandoned it and fled on foot. Meanwhile, troopers who went to the address of the owner of the burning vehicle found Captain, the owner's nephew. Vehicle theft was just one of several charges filed against him.
- Police responding to a bank robbery in Greensburg, Pa., arrested David Morgan, 35, several blocks away because (a) he matched the robber's description and (b) they saw him counting the stolen money while walking down the street.

No Shortage of Shortages

- Cypriots seeking love potions are wearing away the tomb of Saint Agapitikos in the village of Arodes. People have been using dust from the grave in the church courtyard for centuries and are supposed to slip it into the drink of the person they're trying to attract. Reuters reported that in recent years people have begun taking entire shards of stone, so that a quarter of the tomb has disappeared. "I don't know what has come over people, but they are flocking to the tomb for the stuff," Mayor Matthaios Stefanou said. "Just the other day, locals saw some people visiting the tomb, and they were there for a very long time. In the end, they walked off with a huge chunk of stone, maybe even half a kilo of it."
- Cuba is running out of toilet paper and may not get new supplies until the end of the year. Cuba imports toilet paper and makes its own but doesn't have enough raw materials on hand to make any, according to an official with the state conglomerate Cimex. The year-end shipment will enable the state-run company "to supply this demand that today is presenting problems," the official said on state-run Radio Rebelde.

When Guns Are Outlawed

- The day after David Whitaker, 18, told police he was stabbed during a home invasion in Cherokee County, Ga., he admitted making up the story. The Rome News-Tribune reported that Whitaker slashed his own arm while playing with a sword in the house.
- Witnesses told police in Austin, Texas, that Randy Keith Carlson, 43, and another man were arguing when Carlson attacked the other man with deer antlers. KENS-TV News re-

ported the fight ended when an officer pulled up at the scene.

- Authorities charged Yurub Mohammed Arte, 25, with attacking another woman during an argument at a nightclub in Vancouver, British Columbia. The Globe and Mail identified the weapon as a potato peeler.

Hard Times Indeed

- For the first time since the decade began, Americans are having fewer babies—68,000 fewer last year than in 2007, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. The New York Times said some experts are blaming the declining birthrate on the economy. "It's the recession," sociologist Andrew Hacker of Queens College of the City University of New York told the newspaper. "Children are the

Cash for Clunkers Follies

Police who arrested Timothy Kissida, 23, for driving a vehicle involved in a hit-and-run accident in Phoenix, Ariz., said that after the collision, Kissida traded in his 1992 BMW 325i as part of the "Cash for Clunkers" program. Kissida insisted the damage to the vehicle occurred when he hit a wild pig, but ABC15.com reported detectives matched broken automotive pieces from the collision scene to the damaged area of the BMW.



most expensive item in every family's budget, especially given all the gear kids expect today, so it's a good place to cut back when you're uncertain about the future."

- Divorce filings nationally are down as much as 50 percent, again because of the economy, according to WTHR-TV News in Indianapolis. Family law expert Drew Soshnick called divorce a path to bankruptcy because splitting up also means dividing debts. He added that people whose retirement savings have dwindled since last year are rethinking whether divorce is affordable, and many couples are choosing to stay married.

Now Hear This

Japanese police arrested a 41-year-old man they said stabbed a 21-year-old woman who worked at an ear-cleaning salon in Tokyo after

he had been banned from the salon. The attack occurred at the woman's home, where her grandmother was fatally stabbed when she answered the front door. The Yomiuri newspaper reported the suspect told police he had been having trouble with the salon worker and prepared knives to kill her. Ear-cleaning salons are common throughout Japan.

Subpar for the Course

An Irish bookmaker was so sure that golfer Tiger Woods would win the U.S. PGA championship that it paid out \$2 million to nearly 5,000 customers before Woods teed off for his third round while leading by four strokes. The golfing legend lost to South Korea's Yang Yong-Eun in what some called one of the biggest upsets in golfing history. "It takes a special kind of dimwit to turn what should have been our best ever golf result into our worst," a representative of bookmaker Paddy Power told Agence France-Presse.

Odd Endings

- An Alberta woman attempting to exit a parking garage in downtown Calgary died after she became "entangled between her car door and the body of the car," fire department official Jeff Budai told the Calgary Sun. He explained the woman apparently leaned her torso out of the open driver's door to reach the ticket dispenser when the vehicle unexpectedly moved forward. The vehicle then crashed into a post next to the ticket machine intended to prevent people from running into the ticket booth, and the door closed on her, crushing her torso. Budai called the accident "freaky."
- At least five people died to boost the ratings of the Brazilian television show Canal Livre, according to police, who are investigating the show's host, state legislator Wallace Souza. The Associated Press reported that authorities suspect Souza ordered the murders to prove his claim that Brazil's Amazon region is rife with violent crime. "The order to execute always came from the legislator and his son, who then alerted the TV crews to get to the scene before the police," state police intelligence chief Thomaz Vasconcelos charged, adding that the killings "appear to have been committed to get rid of his rivals and increase the audience of the TV show."

Compiled from the nation's press by Roland Sweet. Submit items, citing date and source, to P.O. Box 8130, Alexandria VA 22306.

Blood type: tasty?

Do mosquitoes favor certain blood types over others? I have noticed while out working that mosquitoes love me while my brother never gets bit. Why is my blood so tasty?

—Brian Q., Huntsville, Alabama

Sibling rivalry thing going on there, Brian? I've got good news for you. We still don't know why mom preferred your brother, but we're starting to home in on why mosquitoes prefer you.

A 1972 study in *Nature* found that mosquitoes were more likely to bite people with type O blood than other potential victims, while people with type A got the fewest bites. A follow-up experiment examined whether this had anything to do with the fact that some people secrete chemicals related to blood type—sugarlike substances called saccharides—through their skin. Results: (1) Generally speaking, skeeters favor people with type O blood over those with types A and B blood, confirming the earlier research. (2) They *really* favor type O secretors over type O nonsecretors and type A secretors. (3) They don't have a strong preference between type O secretors and type A non-secretors, a distracting result I'll ignore. Conclusion: to quote a favorite line from the Straight Dope Message Board, if you're a type O secretor, to a mosquito you look like caramel-covered crack.

Other studies have cast doubt on this phenomenon, claiming that factors such as sweatiness are more likely to influence victim selection. But a Japanese study from 2004 seems convincing. Researchers exposed 64 volunteers to a swarm of hungry female mosquitoes, each of which had had its proboscis—the part it bites with—amputated. (One can imagine the outraged e-mail this surely elicited from PETA.) Since the mosquitoes couldn't bite (and thus couldn't drink their fill), the researchers were able to compare how often they landed on the skin of different volunteers. They found type O secretors were twice as attractive to mosquitoes as type A secretors.

How do mosquitoes know about chemicals on your skin? Smell, probably. Mosquito repellents ranging from garlic to DEET seem to work by blocking their sense of smell.

Now for the grim part. Some research suggests being infected with malaria changes your body odor or breath to attract more of the

mosquitoes who infected you in the first place. Does this mean type O secretors who travel to malarial parts of the world are doomed to help spread the illness? Not necessarily. A 1980 study by the World Health Organization showed Indian malaria victims were more likely to have type A blood than any other type. That's not because people with type A get bitten more, the researchers speculated, but rather because when they do get bitten, their type A blood makes them more likely to contract the disease.

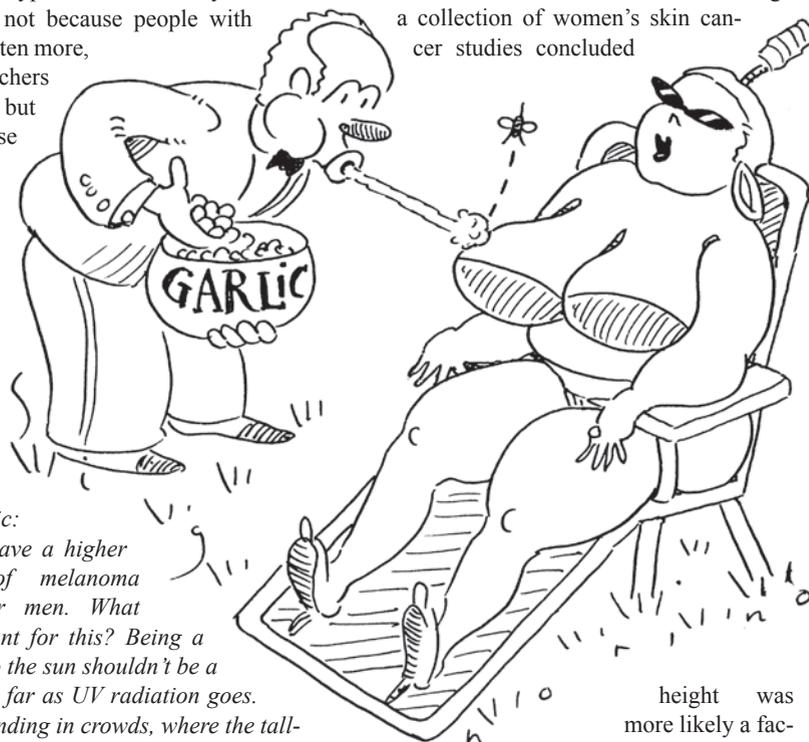
I just read this interesting statistic: taller men have a higher incidence of melanoma than shorter men. What would account for this? Being a foot closer to the sun shouldn't be a big factor as far as UV radiation goes.

Is it from standing in crowds, where the taller men get the sun and the shorter people get their shade? Are taller men balding and so get more sun on their heads?

—Nicki

Who knows? While some health issues are clearly connected to height—banging your head on doorways, say—melanoma (skin cancer) isn't one of them. The major risk factors are sun exposure and ethnic background, with Celtic types having red hair and freckles in greatest danger. However, a few studies claim to show a link between increased height and weight and skin cancer risk—more specifically, between cancer and body skin area (BSA). The idea is that the more skin you've got, the more chances you have to develop skin cancer. For example, a study of farmers in Iowa and North Carolina found that a six-foot-tall person weighing 200 pounds (BSA = 23 square feet) had a 40 percent greater risk of developing skin cancer than a five-foot-tall person of the

same weight (BSA = 21 square feet). Another study conducted in Washington State showed height, weight, and BSA were all risk factors for skin cancer, and that men in the tallest 25 percent of the population were twice as likely to get skin cancer as those in the next quarter down. Australian researchers reviewing a collection of women's skin cancer studies concluded



height was more likely a factor than skin area.

But why? Maybe taller people spend more time outside playing sports, or just eat more as kids. (High calorie intake in childhood is thought to be a risk factor for some cancers.) Maybe it has something to do with hormones—height has been found to correlate with the incidence of other cancers besides melanoma. Then again, let's not forget the Longer Name Hypothesis: In the 22 U.S. presidential elections between 1876 and 1960, the candidate with more letters in his last name won the popular vote 20 times. Interesting? Sure. Meaningful? No. Likewise, the seeming height/cancer connection may just be a statistical fluke.

—CECIL ADAMS

Comments, questions? Take it up with Cecil on the Straight Dope Message Board, straightdope.com, or write him at the Chicago Reader, 11 E. Illinois, Chicago 60611.

ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR SEPTEMBER 2009

FOR EVERYONE—Flux is the new status quo. We will all find ourselves devoting extra time and energy to discussion as plans for the future begin firming up. But this only seems to add to the uncertainty. Many issues still need to be resolved. There are still many unknowns. There are still many opportunities to influence the ultimate outcome. Most of us will be drawn into these discussions as emerging realities affect our vital interests. Nerves will fray and calm will come at a premium. Relationships are foregrounded as uncertainty strains our closest ties and we all consider what ongoing changes mean for our most important bonds. The planets help us facilitate important discussions.

 **ARIES**—Power, with conditions. You have more freedom to think and speak than most people, now. You also have more room to maneuver. People welcome you and your ideas, at first. Initial enthusiasm could turn into resistance. Everyone wants to negotiate special terms. You might find this frustrating, but people need flexibility to fit your ideas into their lives. You might sense an ability to bully or badger people into accepting your ideas. This wouldn't be good for you or them. It might be best to trim your sails a bit.

 **TAURUS**—Friendly conversation and more? You'll find it especially easy to engage others in conversation and there will be generous hints of other possibilities. This will be welcome after a period of relative isolation, socially. But it will be too easy to go too far too fast. This month, too much intimacy too fast could bring far more than the usual problems. Soft words could quickly turn harsh and complications could multiply really fast. Be sure that people are not just running away from their problems or looking for a savior.

 **GEMINI**—Push, a little. September continues an ongoing battle over how the details of current changes will affect your income. Your long-term financial interests are at stake, too. Other people will be making the final decisions, eventually. The process is causing stress at home and at work. Everyone's on edge. Be careful not to overplay your hand or push too hard. Fortunately, as stark as the situation seems, it leaves lots of room to maneuver. Adaptability and negotiation work best. Your control over the situation will increase significantly in coming months.

 **CANCER**—Eagerness for change. Publicly, the planets are casting you in the role of crusader and putting you in the thick of battle. Your mind is bursting with new ideas and your heart is bursting with eagerness to see them put into action. You know they will work. Privately, the planets are pushing you to assert your needs as a person, to seek emotional fulfillment. Your charisma is high this month, so you have a good chance of succeeding on both counts. For everyone's sake, though, try to remain calm.

 **LEO**—Push comes to shove. Tough choices, made some time back, are going into effect. Confusion reigns. You are just now finding out (or figuring out) exactly what it will mean to live with these decisions. Emotional attachments are making these adjustments especially difficult. However, your personal flexibility and your ability to find solutions to new challenges is high right now. Pressure on income will ease as the holidays approach. The new year will bring improvements in long-term financial matters. Advancement and economic improvement will depend increasingly on alliances with others.

 **VIRGO**—High stakes. Amidst the non-stop changes and challenges this month, one thing is clear: Things happening now have momentous implications for your future. You're in the spotlight—and under the microscope. Final decisions will be made gradually, in coming months. You are concerned with the effects of all this on loved ones, who have important concerns of their own. However, your rapport with loved ones is high and the outlook there is good. Success will depend increasingly on your ability to manage restless associates. Next month, personal energy levels improve.

 **LIBRA**—Crossfire. You could find yourself involved in a tense exchange between family members and important people at work. None of you see eye-to-eye on your "work/life balance." The conflict would only get worse if you risked income or incurred debt to pursue your ideal lifestyle. Financial realities are not measuring up to financial dreams now. Soothing romantic vibes drift frequently through your life. Enjoy these moments, but, right now, a new romance would bring unwanted complications. Attention to the fears and anxieties of people at home will prove helpful.

 **SCORPIO**—Seek inspiration. You are out of synch with the outside world. You are feeling at odds with the forces of change. Rebellious youngsters are stirring things up. It will be hard to relax and hard to make others understand why you are upset. It will also be hard to advance your dreams and ambitions with reduced energy levels. It's a good month to get in touch with your otherworldly, psychic side. The spiritual world holds some reassuring answers. Also, despite appearances, the planets are working overtime to protect your interests.

 **SAGITTARIUS**—Tough negotiations. You will find yourself debating the powers that be and struggling to contain your anger and impatience. You will go over the same issues repeatedly and come up with different answers, none of which satisfy you. All the pieces of this complicated puzzle might not be available yet, but you need to be sure that when they finally fall into place, they make a picture you'll like. It is worth the effort because the outcome will affect your lifestyle. Over time, you can successfully shape these important outcomes.

 **CAPRICORN**—Make relationships a priority. Most people are scrambling to do what they must in the face of fast-moving changes. The resulting strain is affecting all relationships. Capricorn relationships are being hit especially hard. Recently you've had little room to maneuver. September brings a significant increase in your power over events, but you must still maneuver through a continuing series of obstacles and adapt to new changes as they come along. Use this increase in your options to shape ongoing events in a way that safeguards important relationships. Manage expectations carefully.

 **AQUARIUS**—The power of communication. You might feel, correctly, that you are being thwarted by social inertia and actively blocked by the powers that be. Your words have surprising resonance, though. You can work around obstacles and help thwart power plays by communicating your ideas. You can use your influence successfully to shape upcoming events. There are still many things yet to be decided, but progress toward your most cherished goals is increasing significantly. You'll have to work overtime to help friends and neighbors overcome conflicts and other difficulties in key relationships.

 **PISCES**—Build patiently. You are experiencing a sense of stability and high energy. The combination is stoking your eagerness to enjoy the fruit of recent efforts. But it will take time to solidify your position and bring all those benefits online. It will also take time to work out all the details of your new life style. You will have to be patient and steadfast to make everything you envision a reality. Be faithful to the lessons you have learned as you embark upon this long journey into a brighter future.

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